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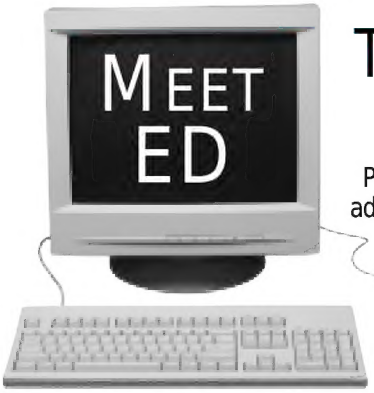
SPECIAL TECHNOLOGY ISSUE

LAFAYETTE VISTAS



THE CITY'S NEW INFORMATION SYSTEMS EXPERT

City Outsources Information Technology (IT) Support

Please meet "**ED**", the newest addition to the City Hall team. Last fall, the City turned over all its information technology (IT) needs to ED. In November, ED put 31 new state-of-the-art work-stations, complete with the most up-to-date software, on each employee's desk. In addition, ED provided a local area network, high-speed Internet access, an e-mail system and nightly automated, off-site backup services for both the servers and desktops. ED is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year to maintain the system, troubleshoot problems and answer any questions the staff may have. Best of all, ED won't ever call in sick or take a vacation.

ED is actually **Everdream,** a Fremont-based "managed service provider". On the recommendation of the City's all citizen, all volunteer Technology Task Force, the City made the decision to scrap its old computers and, instead, contract for its information technology needs. "Small organizations like ours don't have the time or experienced personnel to do computer troubleshooting," said Administrative Services Director Tracy Robinson. "Contracting with Everdream means that City employees can focus on what is really important — working for and talking to the citizens of Lafayette."

The City's three-year agreement with Everdream provides the City offices with the necessary hardware and software together with a service guarantee that supports any and all IT problems until resolution. That means that City workers can turn on their computers, and Everdream starts monitoring, backing up, and updating the systems remotely. If workers encounter problems, or simply have questions about how to use the software, they can reach Everdream by phone or e-mail. The company's service level agreement guarantees that calls will be answered within 90 seconds, and e-mail messages responded to by a live person within four hours – or the monthly charge for that computer is free.

Value to the City

The City spends about $8,100 per month for the service, which is roughly equivalent to what a full-time IT employee would cost, including benefits. Over the three-year contract period, Robinson estimates value savings to the City of about $12,000. "The Everdream solution is slightly less expensive than buying and maintaining the infrastructure in-house," she noted. "But more importantly, we get a lot more value in terms of expertise and support." In the first month alone, City employees called ED 72 times asking questions such as how to forward e-mail from an AOL account and how to get a server rebooted after a power failure. "These are 72 people who didn't come to my desk and ask me a question," says Robinson, "That's valuable cost savings to the City."

Lafayette is likely the first City in the country – maybe the world – to outsource all of its information technology needs. Contracting, however, is not new to the City Council. In fact, since Lafayette contracts for all of its major services, including police, public works maintenance services, construction, and recreation instruction, the Council was quite comfortable with the arrangement.

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY REQUIRES SAFEGUARDS

While the City embraces hi-tech solutions and cost-saving benefits, it is also vigilant about protecting the rights of its citizens to participate in the decision-making process.

California's 1953 Brown Act states, "All meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open and public and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting of the legislative body of a local agency, except as otherwise provided." Unfortunately, unintentional and inadvertent violations of the Brown Act can occur easily via e-mail, which has become pervasive in both business and personal communications. And because it is so simple to forward and copy messages to many people, e-mail communications among and to City officials must be handled carefully since these types of communications can facilitate what amounts to "serial" meetings that are not open to the public – a clear violation of the Brown Act.

For that reason, the City is working to develop policies for the use and storage of email messages for City council and commission members. In fact, last fall during the annual Commissioner's Day event, the City Attorney spoke to council members, commissioners and staff about e-mail and the Brown Act in an effort to educate all concerned parties about the issues. We'll keep you posted about how we plan to maintain these messages as a matter of public record, easily accessible to all citizens.

Technology Aids and Abets Lafayette Police Force

For the past 18 months, all seven of Lafayette's marked patrol cars have been equipped with mobile data computers (MDC). These fully functioning laptop computers take advantage of fully encrypted radio waves to access arrest records and other law enforcement data throughout the state.

In addition to data retrieval, the police MDCs provide a "reduced paper" report writing system that saves time and trips back to headquarters. In the very near future the system will be upgraded to allow reports to be submitted, approved, and filed electronically. Also on the horizon are graphic upgrades that will further streamline police work, including the ability to look up photos for making positive IDs, and computerized photo line ups to help citizens identify suspects without coming to the station house.

"What's really great about the MDCs is that officers spend more time in the field and on patrol," said Police Chief Hank Davis. "That's our job," he added, "It's what the citizens want, and what we're paid for."

Advanced Technology Improves Traffic and Pedestrian Signals

Who hasn't wished that they had the secret power to control traffic signals and get all green lights during rush hour?

Although the technology to put this power at your fingertips doesn't exist quite yet, the City is investing in smarter signal controllers that can be programmed to take into account the different traffic patterns that occur throughout the day and on weekends and holidays.

For example, morning traffic through downtown is generally northbound on Moraga Road and westbound on Mt. Diablo Blvd. The pattern is reversed in the evening. With the completion of our Downtown Project, the timing of lights will be synchronized with the time of day to cut down on wait times and backup. In addition, the lights can be programmed to handle other special traffic patterns such as the lunch hour, school pickups and weekends/holidays.

These new traffic signal controllers as well as new "countdown" pedestrian traffic signals will be in service by early summer.

The new signal controllers will be installed on Mt. Diablo Blvd. at Oak Hill Rd., Moraga Rd. and First St., and on Moraga Rd. at Moraga Blvd., Brook St. and St. Mary's Rd.

The new pedestrian signals, to be located on Mt. Diablo Blvd. at Oak Hill Rd., Moraga Rd. and First St., and on Moraga Rd. at Moraga Blvd., will contribute to pedestrian safety by letting foot traffic know how much time is remaining to safely enter cross walks.

CITIZEN SURVEY: MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Task Force Works to Improve Internal/External Communications

Lafayette's Technology Task Force, comprised of five citizen volunteers and supported by professional staff, has been working for more than a year to recommend technology applications, both internal and web-based, to increase staff productivity and the City's ability to communicate with and serve the community more effectively.

Making Progress

The Task Force's recommendation to outsource information technology services to a "managed service provider" (see front page article) was approved by the City Council as the most efficient and cost effective way to implement the City Office communications infrastructure. Now, the committee has shifted its focus to the City website, which will be completely revamped and upgraded over the course of the year. Before any time or money is spent, though, the Task Force seeks input from the community about the types of information that would be most useful.

Web Site Survey

Here's your opportunity to let us know what you like – and don't like – about the existing City web site. We hope you'll log on to **www.ci.lafayette.ca.us** to see what's there now. Then, either complete the survey online, or fill out the survey on the next page, and mail, fax or deliver it to the City offices.

CITY WEB PAGE SURVEY

Please Return Survey by: **MAY 4**

1 **Do you have a computer?** ❑ Yes ❑ No **If yes, do you have access to the Internet?** ❑ Yes ❑ No

2 **Approximately how often do you visit the City of Lafayette web site?** ❑ Daily ❑ Weekly ❑ Monthly ❑ Quarterly ❑ Yearly ❑ Never

3 **Do you normally access the internet from home or work?** ❑ Home ❑ Work

4 **What is your internet connection speed?** ❑ 28.8k modem ❑ 56.6k modem ❑ DSL, Cable or Faster ❑ Don't know

5 **Please indicate services that you have used or would use if available on the City web site.** (Please check all that apply)

	HAVE USED	WOULD USE		HAVE USED	WOULD USE
Sign up for a class at Parks & Rec.	❑	❑	Obtain a building permit	❑	❑
Look for an agenda/meeting minutes	❑	❑	Ask zoning questions	❑	❑
Submit public comment to the City	❑	❑	Register your business	❑	❑
Report a problem/make a suggestion	❑	❑	Find City Staff	❑	❑
Retrieve Council/Commission contact info	❑	❑	Seek Employment		
View City Meeting Schedule	❑	❑	Opportunities	❑	❑

6 **What else would you like to see on the web site?**

❑ Site Map ❑ Search Engine ❑ City Government Hierarchy ❑ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
❑ Meeting Minutes ❑ City Budget Data ❑ City Demographic Data ❑ Zoning, Parcel or Setback Information
❑ Staff Reports ❑ Ordinances ❑ Status of Major Projects ❑ Information for New Residents
❑ Municipal Code ❑ What's New ❑ School Bus Schedules/Information ❑ Information for New Businesses
❑ Permit Applications (building, parking...) ❑ Other: (please indicate)_____

7 **Please rate the City's website on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being "Terrible" and 5 being "Fantastic"**

	TERRIBLE		GOOD		FANTASTIC
Ease of use	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Look and feel	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Overall Content	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Government Content	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Community Content	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Education Content*	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Business Content*	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Parks & Rec. Content	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Forum Content**	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5
Timeliness of Content	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5

* These are links to pages not maintained by the City of Lafayette, however your feedback will be forwarded to the responsible parties.

** The content in the "Forum" section of the web site is generated by those participating in the discussions, not the City of Lafayette.

8 **What two features could the web site have that would save you time or be most valuable to you or your family?**

_____

9 **Any additional comments?**

_____

10 **Would you consider participating in a focus group of residents asked to comment on additional ideas that could be incorporated into the City web site?** ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No**

(If "yes" please list your email address and/or telephone number.) Phone:_____ Email:_____

If you wish, please tell us something about yourself so that we can better serve you and others like you in the future.
Please answer only those questions that you are comfortable answering.

11 **How many years have you lived in Lafayette?** ❑ less than one year ❑ 1-5 ❑ 5-10 ❑ 10-50 ❑ more than 50

12 **What is your age group?** ❑ under 25 ❑ 25-30 ❑ 30-40 ❑ 40-50 ❑ 50-60 ❑ over 60

13 **How many people are in your household?** ❑ 1 ❑ 2 ❑ 3 ❑ 4 ❑ 5 ❑ more than 5

Return Survey by **MAIL:** P.O. Box 1968, Lafayette, CA 94549 or **FAX:** 284-3169 or complete this survey **ONLINE** at **www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

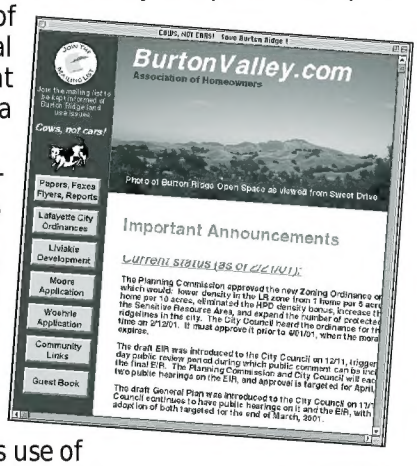
BURTONVALLEY.COM

Web Site Fosters Community Activism

Burton Valley is a Lafayette neighborhood that has been recognized in the press for their innovative use of technology to foster a sense of community. The online neighborhood association, located at **www.burtonvalley.com**, provides information and invites comments on anything that has to do with the important issues facing its residents: land use, traffic, open space and quality of life.

Founded in June 1999, the e-community is completely volunteer-supported and is headed by long-time Burton Valley resident Brad Kisner. "I grew up here, and now my kids are growing up here, and I don't ever want to move," says Kisner. "Three of the six members of the core group involved with the web site are people who grew up here, and want what they had for their families – beautiful surroundings and high quality of life."

The impetus for the web site was Kisner's realization that many people erroneously believe that the hills and ridgelines that surround Burton Valley are protected open space. That's not the case, however. Much of the land is zoned low density residential (LDR), and is owned by developers who want to take advantage of the booming Bay Area economy to build and sell homes.



The web site currently supplies information about three proposed developments, and is responsible for a sense of raised consciousness and vastly increased attendance at meetings and hearings, particularly those devoted to the Draft General Plan, the proposed Hillside Ordinance and the proposed Low Density Residential (LDR) District.

Burtonvalley.com has been heralded for its use of the Internet to bring the community together, and may serve as a model for other neighborhood associations. "This is community activism at its best," said Kisner. "We're providing information and allowing citizens to take part in meetings and hearings where they can stand up and be counted."

SPRING CLEANING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The annual Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority "Reuse and Cleanup Days" is coming to Lafayette in June and will pick up your reusable items at your usual garbage cleanup collection location. These items will be donated to non-profit organizations for distribution, sent to thrift organizations for resale or used for art and arts and crafts projects. Tax receipts will be provided upon request. Look for the yellow brochure in the mail announcing the days the cleanup is coming to your street. For more information, call (800) 999-6067.

CITY DIRECTORY

Council Members message: **284-1968**

Council Members		EXT.
Ivor Samson	**Mayor**	**270**
Don Tatzin	**Vice Mayor**	**272**
Carol Federighi	**Council Member**	**273**
Erling Horn	**Council Member**	**271**
Jay Strauss	**Council Member**	**274**

New City Council seated 11/27/00

For messages to **all** Council Members: **907**

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	**299-3210**

Community Development

• **Director,** Vacant	**284-1968**
• **Engineering Services**	**284-1951**
Tony Coe, Manager	**299-3203**
• **Planning Services**	**284-1976**
Mike Henn, Manager	
• **Public Works Services**	
Ron Lefler, Manager	**299-3214**
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	**299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Shanks, Analyst	**299-3216**
	Or 299-3215

Parks and Recreation **284-2232**

Jennifer Russell, Director	
Yvonne Ozorio, Senior Services	**284-5050**
Teen Programs	**284-5815**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Addresses **Fax: 284-3169**

Street Address:	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210**
Mailing Address:	**P.O. Box 1968**
	Lafayette, CA 94549-1968
Website:	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

E-MAIL: Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using the following address format:

First Initial + Last Name @lovelafayette.org

Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org

LAFAYETTE

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Lafayette, CA 94549-1968

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